

GENERAL METHOD OF PREPARING PLANS AND EXECUTING
THE BUILDINGS AT THE SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

1. General principles of the nature of the accommodation required in the buildings, such as size of courts, corridors, lighting, etc., are discussed between the General Superintendent of the Museum and the Director of New Buildings (an officer of the Royal Engineers).
2. The Director of New Buildings then prepares experimental plans and sections, having regard, primarily, to the above requirements, and, secondly, to decorative construction subject to these requirements. At this stage he consults with the artists and modellers to be subsequently employed in the architectural details. Several sketch plans are generally prepared.
3. Block models are then made, but without inserting architectural details. Several models are generally made and experiments tried and discussed with the General Superintendent.
4. When the block model has been settled the structural plans are finally made, and working drawings proceeded with.
5. To obtain the architectural and decorative details structural plans with sketches are sent to the studios of the artists, who are both modellers and painters.
6. The Director of New Buildings, in concert with the artists, settles the architectural details, which are generally submitted to the Inspector General for Art for suggestions, but the Director of New Buildings remains solely responsible. Many experiments by drawings and models are made.
7. Architectural models with details are prepared. Numerous experiments are made, frequent discussions are had with the Inspector-General for Art and others, and no trouble or cost are spared at this stage before the decision is finally made.
8. If necessary an architectural drawing to the full size in perspective is made and put up and subjected to criticism.
9. Plans being finally settled, quantities are taken out by surveyors, and a limited competition among contractors invited.
10. Models of the architectural details are made in the artist's studio, superintended by the Director of New Buildings.
11. By taking all this trouble, and incurring the cost of such experiments, failures and alterations are very much avoided and final economy is ensured.
12. The highly decorative buildings at South Kensington in terra-cotta and red brick have cost under 1s. the cubic foot, exclusive of mosaics, decorative paintings, and the like. This is below the cost of an ordinary London house of the first class. After six years' duration it has been found that the surfaces and colour of the terra-cotta and brickwork are but slightly affected by the smoke and atmosphere compared with Portland stone, which is much discoloured.

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